Alberta Economic Development

2003 Place-to-Place Price Comparison Survey for Selected Alberta Communities

May 2004

Policy and Economic Analysis

105-02174/

Alberta Economic Development

2003 Place-to-Place Price Comparison Survey for Selected Alberta Communities

May 2004
Policy and Economic Analysis

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION 3

2.0 BACKGROUND 4

2.1 SPATIAL PRICE INDICES 4

3.0 METHODOLOGY 5

3.1 PURPOSE OF SURVEY 5
3.2 SURVEY DESIGN & CONTENT 5
3.3 SPECIAL PRICING PROCEDURES 6
3.4 WEIGHTING FACTORS 6
3.5 INDEX CONSTRUCTION 7
3.6 DATA COLLECTION 8
3.7 DATA PROCESSING 8
3.8 GUARANTEE OF CONFIDENTIALITY 9
3.9 CAUTIONARY NOTES 9

4.0 ANALYSIS OF EDMONTON-BASED COMPARISONS 10

4.1 ALL COMMODITY INDICES 10
4.2 FOOD INDICES 10
4.3 NON-FOOD INDICES 10
4.4 COMMODITY CATEGORY INDICES 11

APPENDIX 12

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In June 2003, Alberta Finance, Statistics conducted a spatial price survey on behalf of Alberta Economic Development and Alberta Learning. A similar survey was conducted in April of 2001 for 10 Alberta communities.

This report presents survey findings for 35 Alberta communities with Edmonton designated as the reference base (i.e. Edmonton=100.0).

The most current population statistics for each location are provided in Table 1. The population reported for Fort McMurray reflects the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, however prices were collected for the urban center of Fort McMurray.

The following sections of this report introduce the concept of price indices; describe how the indices relate to the data presented; detail the survey design and methodology employed; and provide an analysis of the Edmonton-based comparisons. A detailed list of food and non-food categories is presented at the conclusion of this report.

Table 1
2002 ALBERTA POPULATION BY COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY	POPULATION	COMMUNITY	POPULATION
Athabasca	2,415	Jasper	4,180
Barrhead	4,213	Lethbridge	72,717
Brooks	11,604	Lloydminster	13,148
Calgary	904,987	Medicine Hat	51,249
Camrose	15,253	Olds	6,607
Canmore	10,792	Peace River	6,240
Cold Lake	11,595	Pincher Creek	3,666
Drayton Valley	5,801	Ponoka	6,330
Drumheller	7,785	Red Deer	70,593
Edmonton	666,104	Rocky Mountain House	6,208
Fort McMurray	47,240*	Slave Lake	6,600
Grande Cache	3,828	Stettler	5,226
Grande Prairie	36,983	St. Paul	5,061
Hanna	2,986	Taber	7,671
High Level	3,638	Vegreville	5,376
High Prairie	2,820	Wainwright	5,117
High River	9,345	Whitecourt	8,334
Hinton	9,405		

Source: Alberta Municipal Affairs, Municipal Services

*Note: Figure reflects population of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo – Urban Service Area

2.0 BACKGROUND

This section provides a brief background describing the "aggregate" or "complex" price index employed in this survey.

2.1 SPATIAL PRICE INDICES

A price index is a ratio of two numbers: a comparative price and the base price to which it is compared. Indices are tools to measure the differences in one price relative to the other and may be constructed to measure price differences for individual commodities, for a basket of goods, or for a group of commodities. An index that measures differences in individual commodities is referred to as a "price relative" or a "simple price index" whereas an index that measures differences between a group/basket of goods generally represents an "aggregate" or "complex" price index.

The value of the base is generally established at 100.0 with all other prices expressed in terms of this base. An index with a value greater than 100.0 indicates that prices are higher than the base price or vice versa and allows for comparison and interpretation in percentage terms. For example, an index of 120.0 indicates a twenty-percent difference between the base point and the index value inferring that prices are twenty percent higher than the reference base. An index of 90.0 would signify prices are ten percent lower.

There are several different types of price index measurements. The price index produced for this publication is a **spatial price index**, which is location-based and compares the prices of one or more commodities between various locations at a **specific point in time**. Spatial indices may be used to 1) compare one reference location and several communities, and 2) measure price differences between any two communities. For the purpose of this survey, only comparisons with one reference location (Edmonton) and several communities can be made. Since a spatial index does not measure price movements over time but measures price differences between communities, price levels within the comparable communities are always collected at one point in time in order to remove any time-related biases.

For the purposes of this survey, aggregate or complex price indices are generated.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 PURPOSE OF SURVEY

The purpose of the 2003 Alberta Place-to-Place Price Comparison Survey is to measure price differences between selected Alberta communities and Edmonton for a specific basket of goods and services at a specific point in time. The price differentials are measured through the construction of spatial price indices for the selected survey communities.

3.2 SURVEY DESIGN & CONTENT

The following steps are required to construct a spatial price index:

1. The survey communities must be chosen;
2. A basket of goods and services to be surveyed must be selected; and
3. The prices of these goods and services must be collected during a specified time period in each community.

For the 2003 survey sponsors selected 35 Alberta communities with Edmonton designated as the reference location.

The goods and services used for this survey are similar to the survey items used by Statistics Canada to construct monthly Consumer Price Indices for Alberta cities. A total of 299 goods and services form a subset of Statistic Canada's basket of survey items and were selected based on the following criteria:

1. The items comprise those goods and services perceived to be regularly purchased by Alberta consumers (based on the Survey of Household Spending) living in cities, and medium/small-sized towns.
2. The items are judged to be available in most of the selected communities to allow price comparability.

Each item is associated with a retail price such that a sum of money must be paid by a consumer in order to purchase a specific quantity and quality of a good or service.

With the survey locations and a basket of goods and services selected, a pricing period is then established. To minimize time-related biases, prices in all centres were collected within a two-week period from June 14 to 27, 2003.

To ensure accuracy and consistency in the pricing of the 299-item basket of goods and services, it was essential that all the items be carefully matched across all communities. In order to facilitate this process, pricers were provided with specification sheets containing a detailed description of each article to be priced, including brand name, quantity and size. If the specified brand was unavailable, a list of alternatives was also provided. Survey personnel were asked to price one of the specified brands and record other details such as size and style number.

If none of the specified brands were available, pricers were asked to price a close substitute and provide a detailed description of the item. This substitute item was then priced in Edmonton to ensure comparability between the two communities. In this manner, item consistency was assured between Edmonton and each community but could differ among communities for some articles. If a reasonable substitute was unavailable in some communities, these articles were excluded from the survey list for those particular centres.

3.3 Special Pricing Procedures

Certain goods and services could not be directly priced in the field through retail or service outlets found in the survey communities. Items that required special pricing procedures included monthly housing payments, rental costs, property taxes, and utilities such as natural gas, electricity, water, garbage disposal, and sewage charges.

Calculating monthly housing payments and mortgage interest costs for each community required several steps. Housing prices were first collected in each community for several styles of single detached residential dwellings. Alberta Municipal Affairs, Royal LePage Survey of Canadian House Prices, and local real estate boards or agencies provided and/or confirmed housing prices for each community. Several home details such as age of dwelling, square footage of home and lot, amenities, the number of bedrooms and bathrooms, etc. were taken into consideration in pricing a similar home in Edmonton. A survey of the average mortgage down payment and mortgage rates for a one, three and five-year term as of June 2003 was conducted. The mortgage rates were blended to calculate an average mortgage interest of 4.434 per cent as of June 2003. This rate was then applied in combination with a five percent down payment and 25-year amortization period to determine mortgage interest costs for each community.

Average monthly rental costs for each location were obtained through a survey and supported with statistics gathered by Canada Mortgage & Housing, Alberta Seniors, local real estate boards, local property management companies, and local/ municipal government offices.

To derive the average monthly property tax bill in each survey community for June 2003, Alberta Municipal Affairs and local/municipal government offices provided residential mill rates for each community. Residential mill rates were applied to the average housing price surveyed in each community to derive an average monthly tax bill.

In order to calculate monthly natural gas, electricity, water, sewage, and garbage disposal charges per household in each of the survey communities, an average monthly household consumption figure was obtained for each item from local/municipal government offices and/or suppliers of each of these utilities. The consumption figure was then multiplied by the applicable rates to derive typical household costs in each community. Utility suppliers provided delivery charges, consumption charges, administration or billing charges, municipal franchise fees, and rebates that were applied to each location where applicable.

3.4 Weighting Factors

Price indices may be calculated as weighted or not weighted. The disadvantage of "unweighted" price indices is that their relative importance to the consumer is not taken into consideration, therefore equal weight or "importance" is assigned to all goods and their prices. By assigning equal weight to various goods, a distortion of the index can be created. For example, a change in the price of milk would not carry the same significance to a consumer as would a change in the price of meat. If these goods were given equal weight, the resulting change in the overall index would not be accurately measured in terms of their actual consumer impact.

In order to avoid this problem, weights have been assigned to all goods and services priced in the 2003 Alberta Place-to Place Price Comparison Survey. Weights are provided by Statistics Canada and are derived from Survey of Household Spending data. Assigning a weight to each survey item serves to: 1) ensure that goods or services reflect their relative importance to the consumer, 2) correctly calculate a spatial price index, and 3) avoid exerting undue influence on the spatial indices creating a distortion on the true magnitude of the overall price difference between communities.

The 2003 Alberta Place-to Place Price Comparison Survey uses a subset of the basket used by Statistics Canada that determines monthly Consumer Price Index (CPI) for Edmonton and Calgary. The Statistics Canada basket is based on the expenditures of a target population in a certain reference period, i.e. 2001. As such, the basket for the 2003 Alberta Place-to Place Price Comparison Survey is weighted according to the December 2002 CPI expenditure weights for Alberta and accounts for 83.1 percent of the weighted CPI basket. A normalized weighting distribution for the 2003 Alberta Place-to Place Price Comparison Survey basket of goods and services is presented in Figure 4 located in the Appendices. The chart indicates that the weighting pattern used for each aggregate index in the 2003 Alberta Place-to Place Price Comparison Survey is relatively consistent with the 2001 CPI basket of goods and services' weight distribution.

3.5 INDEX CONSTRUCTION

For the purpose of this survey, an aggregate price index was generated using prices observed for 299 commodities in each of the 35 communities. Table 6 in the Appendices outlines the basket of goods and services used to generate the Edmonton-based indices. Several items listed in Statistics Canada's CPI basket were excluded due to the lack of availability or comparability of these items in some survey locations. For each survey community, a total of twenty aggregates are produced which include three aggregate and seventeen sub-aggregate indices. The indices are provided in Tables 2 through 5 found in the Appendices.

The aggregate indices constructed for each survey community include:

1. An all-commodity index (up to 299 items);
2. A food index (up to 112 items);
3. A non-food index (up to 187 items); and
4. A commodity category index (up to 41 items).

Seventeen category-specific indices form subsets of the aggregate food and non-food indices.

The specific food indices are:

- Dairy Products
- Fats and Oils
- Cereals and Breads
- Processed Fruits and Vegetables
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetables
- Meat, Fish, Poultry and Substitutes
- Frozen and Packaged Food
- Restaurant Meals

The non-food indices are:

- Personal Care Products
- Household Supplies
- Household Services
- Household Equipment
- Recreation and Leisure
- Transportation
- Clothing

- Shelter
- Utilities

More complex indices are needed to capture, in a single value, several commodities per location. The most common method of simultaneously comparing several prices between different communities is to compare their averages. For example, suppose prices have been observed for three specific goods in two communities where Location A serves as the base community and Location B is the comparative community. The price of good 1 in Location A is denoted as P_{A1}, and in Location B as P_{B1}. The price ratio for good 1 would therefore be (P_{B1}/P_{A1}), for good 2: (P_{B2}/P_{A2}), and for good 3: (P_{B3}/P_{A3}).

To construct an aggregate price index that compares the average of the price ratios between communities, the price ratios are summed and then divided by the number of entries in the sum. In order to derive an aggregate index value, the average price index of the three commodities is multiplied by 100. The construction of this aggregate price index is:

Aggregate Price Index =

$$\frac{[(P_{B1}/P_{A1}) + (P_{B2}/P_{A2}) + (P_{B3}/P_{A3})]}{\text{Number of Ratios}} \times 100$$

An aggregate price index of 145.0 implies that the prices of the selected goods in Location B are 45 per cent higher than in Location A. Conversely, a price index of 97.0 indicates that prices are 3 per cent lower in Location B than in Location A.

Price ratios are constructed and compare each community with Edmonton. These ratios are then weighted and summed to calculate the various indices. More specifically, the process in deriving the index calculations for the 2003 Alberta Place-to Place Price Comparison Survey is as follows:

Step 1: **Ratio of Prices**:

$$\frac{\text{Average Price of Item in Community A}}{\text{Average Price of Item in Edmonton}}$$

Step 2: **Weighted Ratio**:

Ratio of Prices x Item Weight

Step 3: **Category Index**:

$$\frac{\Sigma \text{ (Weighted Ratio for a Category)}}{\Sigma \text{ (Item Weights for Category)}} \times 100$$

3.6 DATA COLLECTION

Employees of Alberta Finance, Statistics surveyed items through personal visits to retail and service establishments in each survey community. Where possible, staff was hired from each of the local communities to conduct the pricing. To ensure a representative sample of prices, survey personnel collected a minimum of three prices per item in each community. Pricers were asked to disregard special or sale prices on items and to record only regular prices without GST in order to reduce spurious price differences.

3.7 DATA PROCESSING

Data analysis was performed using SAS software. Extensive data editing and verification procedures were utilized to ensure item consistency between Edmonton and the other survey communities.

3.8 GUARANTEE OF CONFIDENTIALITY

The survey was conducted in accordance with The Statistics (Bureau) Act of Alberta, Chapter S-22 of the Revised Statutes of Alberta, 2000, whereby confidentiality is guaranteed under this Act.

3.9 CAUTIONARY NOTES

The reader should note that when using the indices in this publication, the following assumptions and limitations should be kept in mind:

1. The purpose of this survey is to produce spatial price indices that compare price levels in selected communities to those in Edmonton at a specific point in time. The indices constructed for this publication cannot be compared over time to determine price changes.
2. The expenditure weights of the 299-item basket of goods and services are based on the weighting pattern for Alberta from Statistic Canada's Survey of Household Spending data. Since expenditure weighting patterns are unavailable for other survey communities, they are assumed to be the same as those used for Alberta. It is probable that in communities outside Edmonton, consumption and expenditure weighting patterns differ through the influence of local factors such as customs, tastes, incomes and product availability.
3. The 2003 Alberta Place-to Place Price Comparison Survey does not produce cost-of-living indices for the 34 selected communities. The present methodology employed does not incorporate many of the variables necessary to construct such an index. A cost-of-living index requires complete information about a person's tastes and consuming habits and measures price changes that are experienced by consumers in maintaining a constant standard of living. In this situation, consumers would normally switch between products as the price relationship of goods changes and may choose the cheaper of the interchangeable products. The 2003 Alberta Place-to Place Price Comparison Survey utilizes a fixed basket of goods and services to derive the price indices.
4. Variations in the weighting pattern and number of items surveyed arise due to the lack of availability and comparability of certain items in some communities.

4.0 ANALYSIS OF EDMONTON-BASED COMPARISONS

The results of the 2003 Alberta Place-to Place Price Comparison Survey are presented in Tables 2 to 5 and Figures 1 to 3. For all indices, Edmonton prices serve as the reference base with each Edmonton index assigned a value of 100.0. All other indices reflect community prices relative to this base index. For example, communities with an index of 100.0 for any component category or for the total basket of goods and services experience prices that are collectively equivalent to those in Edmonton. Indices of less than 100.0 indicate community prices were, on average, lower than the base community while centres with indices greater than 100.0 recorded prices, that were on average, higher than in Edmonton. As a note, the number of items priced and the weighting patterns can vary between commodity categories for each community surveyed due to lack of availability and comparability of certain items in some communities.

4.1 ALL COMMODITY INDICES

Table 2 and Figure 1 present the aggregate **All-Commodity Indices** for each of the 34 survey communities. Included in Table 2 are the overall weighting patterns for each community and the number of items surveyed.

The all-commodity indices ranged from 88.2 to 124.3 with 12 of the 34 locations reporting higher indices than Edmonton.

For the 2003 survey, Wainwright recorded the lowest price index of 88.2, the result of a low non-food index. The two highest all-commodities indices were reported for Jasper and Canmore at 124.3 and 118.7 respectively. Jasper's high all-commodities index is the result of both high food and non-food indices.

4.2 FOOD INDICES

Overall **Food Indices** are provided in both Table 3 and Figure 2. The food indices range from 93.1 (Cold Lake) to 118.1 (Jasper). Jasper recorded higher price indices for six of the eight individual food component categories that comprise the overall food index. The communities of Canmore and Cold Lake had lower food indices relative to the other surveyed communities for four of the eight category specific food indices.

4.3 NON-FOOD INDICES

Table 4 and Figure 3 present the **Non-Food Indices** for each community. When compared to Edmonton, seven communities reported higher non-food indices ranging from 100.7 (Lloydminster) to 125.9 (Jasper). These communities include Lloydminster, Athabasca, Slave Lake, Calgary, Fort McMurray, Canmore, and Jasper. Wainwright exhibited the lowest non-food index of 86.1 and had the lowest shelter commodity index of 53.7 in comparison to other surveyed communities. In addition, Jasper reported higher price indices for six of the nine specific non-food categories.

In general, the higher non-food indices may be primarily attributed to the significant influence exerted by the shelter component in the spatial price survey. While the shelter category accurately reflects the cost of

housing in each community for similar structures, many qualitative aspects such as location, age of dwelling, finish, etc. may not be fully accounted for in determining real estate values for each of these communities. For this reason, caution must be exercised in generalizing trends for individual commodity categories based on the aggregate indices for the non-food component of this survey.

4.4 COMMODITY CATEGORY INDICES

Table 5 represents a breakdown of both the food and non-food components into their seventeen sub-component commodity categories. The commodity categories that account for approximately 61% of the total survey weight include food, shelter, and transportation. The highest shelter index of 155.1 was reported for Canmore followed by Jasper, Fort McMurray, and Calgary at 136.7, 129.0, and 117.6 respectively. The community of Medicine Hat possessed the lowest utilities price index of 49.0 in comparison to the other surveyed communities that ranged from 82.3 to 119.4. Although these indices are accurate, they may not adequately represent many qualitative differences.

In comparison to Edmonton, several surveyed communities reported higher sub-aggregate price indices for the categories of Personal Care Products, Household Supplies, Household Equipment, and Recreation and Leisure. Lower price indices were generally observed for the commodity categories of Household Services and Shelter.

APPENDIX

TABLE 2

EDMONTON-BASED COMPARISONS

ALL COMMODITY INDICES

Number of Items Surveyed, Aggregate Indices and Weighting Patterns
Selected Alberta Communities
June 2003

COMMUNITY	NUMBER OF ITEMS SURVEYED*	WEIGHTING PATTERN*	ALL COMMODITY INDICES
Edmonton**	299	83.1	100.0
Athabasca	288	81.7	101.5
Barrhead	297	82.9	93.2
Brooks	296	82.6	99.9
Calgary	299	83.1	105.0
Camrose	297	82.7	99.4
Canmore	294	82.7	118.7
Cold Lake	290	82.4	97.0
Drayton Valley	294	82.8	97.0
Drumheller	294	82.3	93.3
Fort McMurray	299	83.1	109.2
Grande Cache	273	71.7	99.3
Grande Prairie	297	83.1	100.3
Hanna	289	82.3	94.6
High Level	288	82.2	101.0
High Prairie	295	82.8	101.2
High River	292	82.1	99.5
Hinton	292	82.4	101.2
Jasper	266	72.4	124.3
Lethbridge	299	83.1	94.8
Lloydminster	298	82.9	100.2
Medicine Hat	299	83.1	91.8
Olds	297	82.7	96.6
Peace River	294	82.7	100.6
Pincher Creek	284	81.2	99.2
Ponoka	291	82.2	94.9
Red Deer	299	83.1	97.7
Rocky Mountain House	294	82.4	96.7
Slave Lake	293	82.2	104.1
St. Paul	289	81.7	92.6
Stettler	298	82.9	97.0
Taber	277	79.4	95.2
Vegreville	290	82.1	94.9
Wainwright	295	82.6	88.2
Whitecourt	293	82.8	97.5

* Notes: Variations in the weighting pattern and number of items surveyed arise due to the lack of availability and comparability of certain items in some communities.

** Edmonton = 100.0

TABLE 3

EDMONTON-BASED COMPARISONS

ALL FOOD INDICES

Number of Food Items Surveyed, Aggregate Indices and Weighting Patterns
Selected Alberta Communities
June 2003

COMMUNITY	NUMBER OF ITEMS SURVEYED*	WEIGHTING PATTERN*	FOOD INDICES
Edmonton**	112	15.0	100.0
Athabasca	112	15.0	103.7
Barrhead	111	15.0	104.1
Brooks	112	15.0	108.2
Calgary	112	15.0	104.1
Camrose	112	15.0	98.0
Canmore	112	15.0	97.1
Cold Lake	112	15.0	93.1
Drayton Valley	110	15.0	98.6
Drumheller	111	15.0	103.2
Fort McMurray	112	15.0	101.4
Grande Cache	109	15.0	111.0
Grande Prairie	111	15.0	106.6
Hanna	111	15.0	100.5
High Level	112	15.0	106.3
High Prairie	112	15.0	107.1
High River	112	15.0	100.5
Hinton	111	15.0	113.7
Jasper	112	15.0	118.1
Lethbridge	112	15.0	100.3
Lloydminster	112	15.0	98.1
Medicine Hat	112	15.0	100.6
Olds	112	15.0	94.7
Peace River	111	15.0	105.8
Pincher Creek	111	15.0	100.5
Ponoka	111	15.0	101.2
Red Deer	112	15.0	103.0
Rocky Mountain House	112	15.0	100.5
Slave Lake	112	15.0	101.2
St. Paul	112	15.0	95.3
Stettler	112	15.0	97.0
Taber	112	15.0	104.8
Vegreville	111	15.0	98.6
Wainwright	111	15.0	97.8
Whitecourt	112	15.0	105.4

* Notes: Variations in the weighting pattern and number of items surveyed arise due to the lack of availability and comparability of certain items in some communities.

** Edmonton = 100.0

TABLE 4

EDMONTON-BASED COMPARISONS

ALL NON-FOOD INDICES

Number of Non-Food Items Surveyed, Aggregate Indices and Weighting Patterns
Selected Alberta Communities
June 2003

COMMUNITY	NUMBER OF ITEMS SURVEYED*	WEIGHTING PATTERN*	NON-FOOD INDICES
Edmonton**	187	68.1	100.0
Athabasca	176	66.7	101.0
Barrhead	186	67.9	90.8
Brooks	184	67.6	98.1
Calgary	187	68.1	105.2
Camrose	185	67.7	99.7
Canmore	182	67.6	123.4
Cold Lake	178	67.4	97.9
Drayton Valley	184	67.8	96.6
Drumheller	183	67.3	91.1
Fort McMurray	187	68.1	110.9
Grande Cache	164	56.7	96.2
Grande Prairie	186	67.0	98.9
Hanna	178	67.3	93.2
High Level	176	67.2	99.8
High Prairie	183	67.8	99.9
High River	180	67.0	99.3
Hinton	181	67.4	98.4
Jasper	154	57.4	125.9
Lethbridge	187	68.1	93.6
Lloydminster	186	67.9	100.7
Medicine Hat	187	68.1	89.9
Olds	185	67.7	97.0
Peace River	183	67.7	99.4
Pincher Creek	173	66.2	98.9
Ponoka	180	67.2	93.5
Red Deer	187	68.1	96 5
Rocky Mountain House	182	67.4	95.9
Slave Lake	181	67.2	104.7
St. Paul	177	66.7	92.0
Stettler	186	67.9	97.1
Taber	165	64.4	93.0
Vegreville	179	67.1	94.0
Wainwright	184	67.6	86.1
Whitecourt	181	67.8	95.7

* Notes: Variations in the weighting pattern and number of items surveyed arise due to the lack of availability and comparability of certain items in some communities.

** Edmonton = 100.0

TABLE 5

EDMONTON-BASED COMPARISONS

COMMODITY CATEGORY INDICES

Number of Food Items Surveyed*, Aggregate Indices
Selected Alberta Communities
June 2003

COMMUNITY	DAIRY		FATS & OILS		CEREALS & BREADS		PROCESSED FRUITS & VEGETABLES	
	Index	No. Of Items	Index	No. Of Items	Index	No. Of Items	Index	No. Of Items
Edmonton**	100.0	11	100.0	2	100.0	14	100.0	15
Athabasca	110.2	11	106.6	2	107.2	14	102.5	15
Barrhead	118.9	11	106.5	2	111.5	14	110.2	14
Brooks	107.2	11	110.5	2	104.3	14	106.0	15
Calgary	104.9	11	102.4	2	97.4	14	103.0	15
Camrose	101.7	11	95.3	2	102.0	14	95.6	15
Canmore	101.2	11	98.3	2	84.1	14	91.4	15
Cold Lake	104.6	11	87.5	2	99.9	14	93.3	15
Drayton Valley	106.9	11	102.9	2	103.1	14	109.6	15
Drumheller	118.1	11	116.3	2	108.9	14	102.1	15
Fort McMurray	107.9	11	101.4	2	101.1	14	101.6	15
Grande Cache	114.9	11	109.4	2	115.2	12	111.1	14
Grande Prairie	112.6	11	110.0	2	99.7	14	111.5	14
Hanna	110.4	11	98.5	2	110.8	14	110.0	14
High Level	111.6	11	114.2	2	105.7	14	106.3	15
High Prairie	117.7	11	105.1	2	107.6	14	117.9	15
High River	108.2	11	89.0	2	104.7	14	95.4	15
Hinton	113.1	11	112.2	2	115.3	14	114.1	15
Jasper	115.9	11	118.8	2	130.4	14	124.9	15
Lethbridge	106.6	11	107.3	2	104.7	14	105.9	15
Lloydminster	96.7	11	102.2	2	109.0	14	103.6	15
Medicine Hat	99.6	11	107.4	2	100.6	14	100.2	15
Olds	104.9	11	99.1	2	93.5	14	95.4	15
Peace River	108.8	11	111.7	2	110.9	14	112.0	14
Pincher Creek	109.5	11	106.9	2	98.2	14	104.1	14
Ponoka	106.7	11	103.6	2	102.9	14	103.7	14
Red Deer	103.0	11	99.4	2	98.7	14	101.5	15
Rocky Mtn.House	113.0	11	99.7	2	109.1	14	109.4	15
Slave Lake	108.3	11	101.5	2	97.9	14	105.3	15
St. Paul	105.6	11	100.9	2	95.9	14	96.9	15
Stettler	105.8	11	100.8	2	97.3	14	103.6	15
Taber	109.2	11	112.5	2	110.8	14	118.7	15
Vegreville	105.0	11	108.1	2	111.0	14	106.2	14
Wainwright	106.0	11	105.4	2	103.8	14	101.4	14
Whitecourt	106.8	11	91.6	2	102.1	14	108.2	15

* Notes: Variations in the weighting pattern and number of items surveyed arise due to the lack of availability and comparability of certain items in some communities.

** Edmonton = 100.0

TABLE 5 (cont.)

EDMONTON-BASED COMPARISONS

COMMODITY CATEGORY INDICES

Number of Food Items Surveyed*, Aggregate Indices
Selected Alberta Communities
June 2003

COMMUNITY	FRESH FRUIT & VEGETABLES		MEAT, FISH, POULTRY & SUBSTITUTES		FROZEN & PACKAGED FOODS		RESTAURANT MEALS	
	Index	No. Of Items	Index	No. Of Items	Index	No. Of Items	Index	No. Of Items
Edmonton**	100.0	14	100.0	28	100.0	23	100.0	5
Athabasca	103.2	14	94.1	28	118.8	23	96.7	5
Barrhead	120.9	14	103.4	28	115.6	23	82.3	5
Brooks	120.2	14	112.8	28	113.1	23	100.1	5
Calgary	116.5	14	103.8	28	104.6	23	102.3	5
Camrose	97.5	14	99.4	28	97.3	23	95.3	5
Canmore	78.5	14	99.1	28	103.0	23	103.6	5
Cold Lake	96.1	14	90.4	28	97.4	23	84.7	5
Drayton Valley	97.0	14	89.6	27	123.4	23	82.7	5
Drumheller	112.8	13	102.0	28	116.1	23	84.9	5
Fort McMurray	100.0	14	103.4	28	105.0	23	96.4	5
Grande Cache	120.8	14	109.4	28	123.4	23	97.8	5
Grande Prairie	111.0	14	109.8	28	109.5	23	101.2	5
Hanna	119.2	14	102.5	28	112.1	23	76.7	5
High Level	100.5	14	99.8	28	122.9	23	100.2	5
High Prairie	127.5	14	94.3	28	119.5	23	94.5	5
High River	110.2	14	95.4	28	102.4	23	95.7	5
Hinton	130.5	13	113.6	28	125.9	23	99.6	5
Jasper	115.1	14	111.6	28	136.3	23	106.4	5
Lethbridge	103.6	14	102.0	28	110.8	23	86.7	5
Lloydminster	108.2	14	103.7	28	113.9	23	76.4	5
Medicine Hat	106.0	14	99.8	28	105.2	23	96.4	5
Olds	106.7	14	90.3	28	109.9	23	80.5	5
Peace River	120.1	14	105.6	28	115.3	23	90.6	5
Pincher Creek	114.4	14	107.3	28	109.5	23	83.0	5
Ponoka	105.3	14	96.9	28	117.1	23	89.4	5
Red Deer	107.5	14	99.3	28	102.9	23	105.9	5
Rocky Mtn.House	115.3	14	106.3	28	105.0	23	79.9	5
Slave Lake	108.0	14	95.1	28	113.4	23	93.0	5
St. Paul	105.9	14	96.5	28	103.2	23	81.9	5
Stettler	100.5	14	90.2	28	110.3	23	87.2	5
Taber	106.5	14	109.3	28	116.7	23	87.7	5
Vegreville	99.7	14	103.0	28	109.7	23	80.1	5
Wainwright	95.4	14	89.0	28	113.9	23	87.9	5
Whitecourt	106.9	14	92.3	28	123.9	23	102.1	5

* Notes: Variations in the weighting pattern and number of items surveyed arise due to the lack of availability and comparability of certain items in some communities.

** Edmonton = 100.0

TABLE 5 (cont.)

EDMONTON-BASED COMPARISONS

COMMODITY CATEGORY INDICES

Number of Non-food Items Surveyed*, Aggregate Indices
Selected Alberta Communities
June 2003

COMMUNITY	PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS		HOUSEHOLD SUPPLIES		HOUSEHOLD SERVICES		HOUSEHOLD EQUIPMENT	
	Index	No. Of Items	Index	No. Of Items	Index	No. Of Items	Index	No. Of Items
Edmonton**	100.0	21	100.0	27	100.0	17	100.0	24
Athabasca	109.5	21	109.9	26	88.2	15	115.0	22
Barrhead	112.1	21	105.2	27	82.8	17	105.7	24
Brooks	110.5	21	110.8	27	95.4	16	104.8	24
Calgary	103.6	21	103.0	27	104.0	17	100.5	24
Camrose	94.2	21	100.0	27	103.2	17	103.3	24
Canmore	111.2	21	106.8	27	100.9	15	107.3	24
Cold Lake	98.1	21	99.7	27	90.1	15	99.8	24
Drayton Valley	114.4	21	110.3	27	101.0	15	104.7	24
Drumheller	117.0	21	117.0	26	83.5	16	109.2	24
Fort McMurray	92.7	21	93.5	27	106.4	17	113.0	24
Grande Cache	123.0	21	108.3	25	93.0	12	114.3	20
Grande Prairie	108.7	21	109.3	27	91.6	17	104.1	24
Hanna	116.1	21	116.9	26	86.7	13	113.1	24
High Level	116.7	21	108.7	26	93.2	14	103.2	22
High Prairie	119.5	21	115.1	27	100.1	15	109.1	23
High River	105.0	21	98.3	27	96.3	16	106.2	21
Hinton	116.3	21	106.3	27	89.8	17	105.2	24
Jasper	128.3	21	131.3	25	104.3	13	105.5	14
Lethbridge	101.0	21	102.1	27	94.8	17	96.9	24
Lloydminster	103.2	21	114.1	27	99.9	17	111.7	24
Medicine Hat	94.2	21	106.7	27	88.8	17	104.1	24
Olds	110.8	21	107.0	27	96.7	17	109.6	24
Peace River	111.1	21	118.6	27	99.4	17	103.7	24
Pincher Creek	101.5	21	112.7	26	84.3	14	110.3	17
Ponoka	106.5	21	107.8	27	86.1	17	105.1	22
Red Deer	98.7	21	106.9	27	97.2	17	101.0	24
Rocky Mtn.House	104.7	21	103.9	27	88.6	17	104.8	24
Slave Lake	113.3	21	106.6	27	99.6	15	114.5	22
St. Paul	111.3	21	108.4	27	88.0	17	108.8	23
Stettler	103.2	21	95.1	27	84.4	17	108.9	24
Taber	108.8	21	110.8	25	82.7	12	108.8	20
Vegreville	105.2	21	103.2	27	88.5	17	106.6	23
Wainwright	109.4	21	100.9	27	94.2	17	103.6	24
Whitecourt	114.3	21	98.5	27	95.7	16	105.7	23

* Notes: Variations in the weighting pattern and number of items surveyed arise due to the lack of availability and comparability of certain items in some communities.

** Edmonton = 100.0

TABLE 5 (cont.)

EDMONTON-BASED COMPARISONS

COMMODITY CATEGORY INDICES

Number of Non-food Items Surveyed*, Aggregate Indices
Selected Alberta Communities
June 2003

COMMUNITY	RECREATION & LEISURE		TRANSPORT-ATION		CLOTHING		SHELTER		UTILITIES	
	Index	No. Of Items	Index	No. Of Items	Index	No. Of Items	Index	No. Of Items	Index	No. Of Items
Edmonton**	100.0	31	100.0	18	100.0	41	100.0	5	100.0	3
Athabasca	105.6	31	107.0	17	103.0	36	86.1	5	117.4	3
Barrhead	100.5	31	88.7	17	96.1	41	74.9	5	109.3	3
Brooks	99.2	31	101.8	16	105.3	41	88.2	5	98.9	3
Calgary	108.9	31	98.1	18	103.6	41	117.6	5	82.3	3
Camrose	98.9	31	102.5	17	96.8	40	95.6	5	106.2	3
Canmore	136.4	30	101.7	17	109.9	40	155.1	5	106.2	3
Cold Lake	97.6	31	110.2	17	101.7	35	87.0	5	100.2	3
Drayton Valley	102.7	31	99.8	17	93.9	41	81.0	5	108.1	3
Drumheller	104.1	30	90.1	17	98.1	41	69.3	5	109.8	3
Fort McMurray	105.9	31	101.3	18	100.1	41	129.0	5	112.9	3
Grande Cache	106.8	30	102.4	14	106.6	34	74.7	5	109.8	3
Grande Prairie	97.4	31	101.6	18	104.6	40	88.7	5	119.4	3
Hanna	103.8	30	101.3	16	98.2	40	66.3	5	107.6	3
High Level	105.7	31	99.3	17	106.5	37	88.4	5	117.9	3
High Prairie	106.7	31	105.2	17	98.8	41	80.3	5	118.4	3
High River	103.6	31	100.5	16	97.7	40	93.7	5	103.4	3
Hinton	103.9	31	103.4	18	104.5	41	85.8	5	101.6	3
Jasper	152.9	30	105.7	13	113.2	30	136.7	5	96.6	3
Lethbridge	104.8	31	97.5	18	99.5	41	80.2	5	90.5	3
Lloydminster	96.4	31	107.8	17	108.5	41	89.1	5	107.3	3
Medicine Hat	99.8	31	96.1	18	101.1	41	81.1	5	49.0	3
Olds	102.0	31	95.7	17	102.1	40	85.3	5	108.0	3
Peace River	100.8	30	113.2	17	101.9	39	77.5	5	113.5	3
Pincher Creek	104.0	31	103.2	17	99.2	39	87.0	5	115.9	3
Ponoka	100.4	30	105.0	16	101.9	39	70.3	5	105.7	3
Red Deer	100.9	31	102.2	18	101.3	41	87.4	5	88.5	3
Rocky Mtn.House	99.7	31	96.5	17	105.3	37	85.4	5	109.2	3
Slave Lake	103.0	31	109.2	17	99.6	40	96.9	5	117.9	3
St. Paul	104.1	31	95.1	16	99.6	34	69.6	5	108.9	3
Stettler	99.6	31	98.9	17	99.2	41	88.6	5	114.1	3
Taber	100.2	29	103.7	16	97.5	34	70.1	5	105.1	3
Vegreville	102.0	31	104.3	16	105.5	36	71.9	5	103.4	3
Wainwright	97.8	31	95.1	16	98.8	40	53.7	5	103.1	3
Whitecourt	103.7	29	96.6	17	102.0	40	81.1	5	106.9	3

* Notes: Variations in the weighting pattern and number of items surveyed arise due to the lack of availability and comparability of certain items in some communities.

** Edmonton = 100.0

FIGURE 1

ALL COMMODITY INDICES BY LOCATION

FIGURE 2
ALL FOOD INDICES BY LOCATION

FIGURE 3
ALL NON-FOOD INDICES BY LOCATION

FIGURE 4

Percent Distribution of Weights by Category

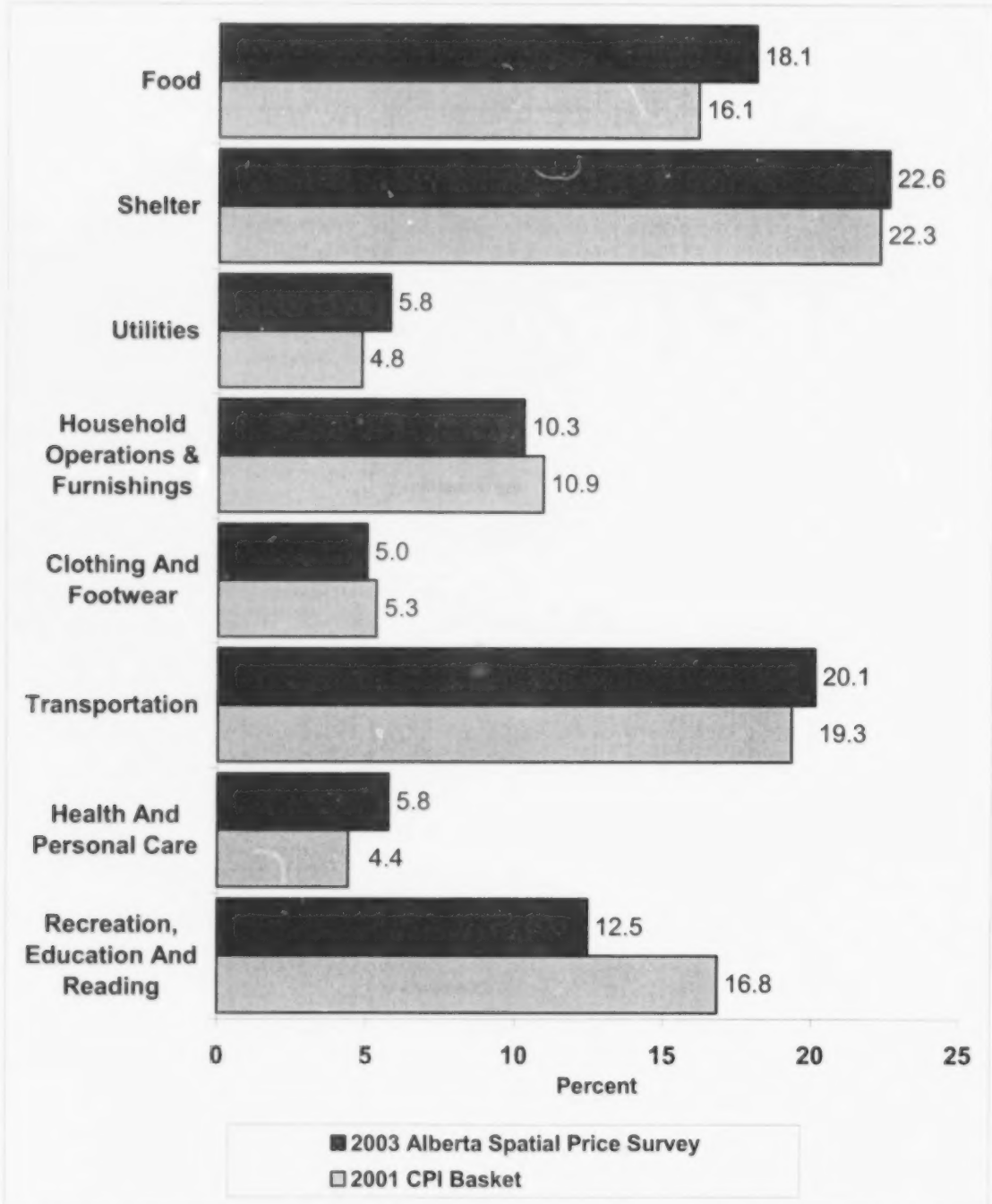

TABLE 6

CATEGORIES AND ITEMS SURVEYED

Food and Non-Food Items

CATEGORY	WEIGHT	CATEGORY	WEIGHT
1. Dairy	1.42	**5. Fresh Fruits & Vegetables (cont.)**	
Butter		Grapefruit	
Cheese		Grapes	
Cottage Cheese		Green Pepper	
Cream		Lettuce	
Ice Cream		Onions	
Milk		Oranges	
Processed Cheese Slices		Potatoes	
Yogurt		Tomatoes	
2. Fats & Oils	0.12		
Cooking Oil		**6. Meat, Fish, Poultry & Other**	2.59
Margarine		Beef, Various Cuts	
		Canned Luncheon Meat	
3. Cereals & Breads	1.70	Chicken, Various Cuts	
Bran Muffins		Eggs	
Bread		Fish, Canned	
Buns		Fish, Frozen	
Cold Cereal		Liver	
Cookies		Peanuts	
Crackers		Pork, Various Cuts	
Doughnuts		Prepared Luncheon Meats	
Flour		Turkey, Frozen	
Macaroni			
Rice		**7. Frozen & Packaged Foods**	2.69
Rolled Oats		Baby Food	
		Cake, Frozen	
4. Processed Fruits & Vegetables	0.68	Cocoa	
Canned Fruit		Coffee	
Canned Vegetables		Fruit Flavored Crystals	
French Fried Potatoes, Frozen		Honey	
Frozen Vegetables		Infant Formula	
Fruit Juice, Frozen		Ketchup	
Fruit Juice, Packaged		Macaroni Dinner	
Jam		Meat pies, Frozen	
Raisins		Peanut Butter	
		Pepper	
5. Fresh Fruits & Vegetables	1.53	Pickles	
Apples		Potato Chips	
Bananas		Salad Dressing	
Broccoli		Salt	
Cabbage		Soft Drinks	
Carrots		Soup, Canned	
Celery		Spaghetti Sauce	
Grapefruit		Sugar	
		Tea	

TABLE 6 (cont.)

CATEGORIES AND ITEMS SURVEYED

Food and Non-Food Items

CATEGORY	WEIGHT
8. Restaurant Meals	**4.29**
Breakfast, Restaurant	
Dinner, Restaurant	
Lunch, Restaurant	
Snack, Restaurant	
Take-out Meal	
9. Personal Care Products	**2.60**
Analgesic, A.S.A	
Antiseptic	
Bandages	
Bar Soap	
Cleansing 'Cold' Cream	
Cold Remedy	
Contact Lens Solution	
Cough Remedy	
Deodorant /Antiperspirant	
Disposable Diapers	
Lipstick	
Men's Shaving Cream	
Prescription Medicine	
Razor Blades, Men's	
Sanitary Napkins	
Shampoo	
Tampons	
Toothpaste	
Women's Spray Cologne	
10. Household Supplies	**2.24**
All-Purpose Cleaner	
Aluminum Foil	
Bleach	
Cut Flowers	
Dishwashing Detergent, Powder	
Dog food	
Dry Cell Batteries	
Envelopes	
Fabric Softener	
Facial Tissues	
Garbage Bags	
Lawn Fertilizer	
Light Bulbs	
Liquid Dish Soap	
Nursery Shrub	
Paper Towels	

CATEGORY	WEIGHT
10. Household Supplies (cont.)	
Plastic Food Wrap	
Potted Flowers	
Scouring Powder	
Sewing Thread	
Solid Broadcloth	
Synthetic Detergent	
Table Napkins, Paper	
Toilet Tissue	
11. Household Services	**4.22**
Baby-Sitting	
Chiropractic Services	
Coin Operated Laundry	
Day Care	
Dry Cleaning	
Eyeglass Lenses	
House Cleaning Service	
Internet Service	
Men's Hair Cut	
Shoe Repairs	
Tooth Restoration	
Veterinary Services	
Video. Cassette Recorder Repairs	
Women's Hairstyling	
12. Household Equipment	**4.69**
Bath Towel	
Bedsheets	
Circular Saw, Electric	
Comforter	
Computer Floppy Disk	
Electric Drill	
Electric Kettle	
Electric Range	
Entertainment Center	
Every Day Dinnerware Set	
Food Mixer	
Glass Pie Plate	
Hammer	
Lawnmower, Gasoline	
Mattress and Box Spring	
Microwave Oven	
Paint	
Patio Furniture	

TABLE 6 (cont.)

CATEGORIES AND ITEMS SURVEYED

Food and Non-Food Items

CATEGORY	WEIGHT	CATEGORY	WEIGHT
12. Household Equipment (cont.)		**14. Transportation (cont.)**	
Refrigerator		Disc-Brake Pads	
Shingles, Roof		Replacement	
Stainless Steel Cookware		Gasoline	
Stainless Steel Flatware		Local Transit Fee	
Vacuum Cleaner		Minor Tune-Up	
Window Blinds		Motor Oil	
		New Vehicle Purchase	
13. Recreation & Leisure	**10.29**	Oil Change & Lubrication	
Audio Cassette Tape, Blank		Oil Filter	
Beer		Taxi Fare	
Beer, In Bar or Lounge			
Bicycle, All-Terrain		**15. Clothing**	**3.82**
Board Game		Boy's Athletic Shoes	
Cablevision		Boy's Athletic Socks	
Camera		Boy's Briefs	
Cigarettes		Boy's Denim Jeans	
Colour Film & Processing		Boy's Swim Trunks	
Digital Video Disc (DVD)		Girl's Bathing Suit	
Player		Girl's Briefs	
Doll		Girl's Jeans	
Golf Balls		Girl's Socks	
Golf Green Fee		Girl's T-shirt	
Hard Liquor		Gold Wedding Band	
Highball, In Bar or Lounge		Infant's Sleeper	
Liqueur		Men's Athletic Shoe	
Movie Cassette Rental		Men's Briefs	
Newspaper		Men's Business Suit	
Portable CD Player		Men's Casual Shoes	
Pre-recorded Video Cassette		Men's Denim Jeans	
Television		Men's Dress Shirt	
Toy Construction Set		Men's Dress Shoe	
Video Camera		Men's Dress Socks	
Video Cassette Tape, Blank		Men's Dress/Casual Slacks	
Video Game Rental		Men's Golf Jacket	
Wine		Men's Knit Shirt	
		Men's Sport Socks	
14. Transportation	**16.72**	Men's Swim Trunks	
Antifreeze/Coolant		Men's Wrist Watch	
Auto Insurance		Women' s Casual Shoes	
Automobile Paint Job		Women's Bathing Suit	
Car Rental		Women's Blazer	
		Women's Brassiere	
		Women's Briefs	
		Women's Camisole	
		Women's Dress Shoes	

TABLE 6 (cont.)

CATEGORIES AND ITEMS SURVEYED

Food and Non-Food Items

CATEGORY	WEIGHT	CATEGORY	WEIGHT
15. Clothing (cont.)		**16. Shelter**	**18.77**
Women's Half Slip		Mortgage Interest	
Women's Nightgown		Property Taxes	
Women's Panty Hose		Rental Costs	
Women's Raincoat		Replacement Cost	
Women's Shirt		Tenant's Insurance	
Women's Slacks			
Women's Suit		**16.** Utilities	4.79
Women's Wrist Watch		Electricity	
		Natural Gas	
		Water, Sewage & Garbage	

Policy & Economic Analysis
Alberta Economic Development
4th floor, Commerce Place
10155 - 102 Street
Edmonton AB Canada T5J 4L6

Telephone: 780.427-6787
Fax: 780.422-0061
Website: www.alberta-canada.com

You can access the Place-to-Place Price Comparison Survey and the following related department publications on the web at www.alberta-canada.com/statpub:

- Alberta's International Exports
- Facts on Alberta
- Monthly Economic Review
- Inventory of Major Alberta Projects
- Inventory of Regional Alberta Projects
- Alberta Business Outlook

© 2004 Government of Alberta
ISBN 0-7785-3360-3
ISSN 0228-3794

Printed in Canada